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ANNUAL REPORT

# **SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND**

FISCAL YEAR 1978-1979



Printed Under the Direction of the  
State Budget and Control Board



**ANNUAL REPORT**

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COMMISSION  
FOR THE BLIND**

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The South Carolina Commission for the Blind is in compliance with the provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VI and all requirements imposed pursuant thereto to the end that no person shall, on the grounds of sex, race, color or national origin be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of or be otherwise subjected to discrimination in the provision of any care or service. Any client participant, potential client, or interested person who is of an opinion that Benefits are provided on a discriminatory basis has the right to file a complaint with the State Agency or Federal Agency or both.

Respectfully submitted,  
 COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND  
 Maxine R. Bowler  
 Commissioner



## LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

September 1, 1979

The Honorable Richard W. Riley  
Governor of South Carolina  
Columbia, South Carolina

Dear Governor Riley:

The South Carolina Commission for the Blind deeply appreciates your efforts on behalf of the agency and the state's blind and visually impaired during your first year in office. Your commitment to improved health care services has helped us reach many individuals who would otherwise not be served.

This report to you focuses on the highlights and accomplishments of Fiscal Year 1979. It was a good year in terms of quality service to clients despite rising costs.

We look forward to continued improvement in the coming year and we feel assured we can rely on you and the General Assembly to provide the support needed to assist South Carolina's blind and visually impaired.

Respectfully submitted,  
**COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND**  
Maxine R. Bowles  
Commissioner

## COMMISSION BOARD

Mr. Allan C. Mustard .....	Columbia
Chairman	
Mrs. Onnie D. Barham .....	Columbia
Mr. A. Peter Anselmo .....	Florence
Mr. Samuel L. Zimmerman .....	Greenville
Clay W. Evatt, Jr., M.D. ....	Charleston
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Mr. Robert R. Bell .....	Laurens



## ADMINISTRATION

A major accounting and fiscal disbursement feat was accomplished by the South Carolina Commission for the Blind (SCCB) during the state fiscal year 1978-1979. Less than one tenth of one percent of the state money allocated the agency was lapsed to the General Fund. This commendable task was the result of team participation by department heads and a new computer system designed to keep a daily tab on expenditures and encumbrances. Supervisors were able to better serve their clients by means of knowing how much money they had left in their account and by being able to prioritize expenditures for case services. This close control over funds helped to cut down on state agencies' excessive spending, a request of the Budget and Control Board.

The total budget for the year was \$4,220,711, an increase of four percent over last year's total of \$4,056,894.

February 11, 1978 was a sad day for all blind South Carolinians and those sighted individuals who work for the betterment of the blind. Mrs. Ellen Beach Mack, a pioneer and guiding spirit of the state's blind died, two weeks short of her 95th birthday. "Mother Mack," as she was affectionately known, helped establish the first chartered association for the blind in the Palmetto State in 1920. She served as Executive Secretary of the Association for 40 years and then on the board of directors in an advisory capacity. The new home of the SCCB, the Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center for the Blind, was dedicated in her honor in 1977.

Twice during the year the SCCB Consumer Advisory Committee met to provide input into the agency's governing board. The committee also requested a published brochure on the various consumer agencies for the blind in South Carolina. This brochure is now distributed with all other Commission materials.

A new, uniquely designed brochure on the SCCB and its services was published and distributed statewide. The brochure explained the various departments of the agency with detailed information on the Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center. Braille, large type and cassette copies of the brochure were produced and made available to the state's blind population.

An updated version of the Commission's slide program that explains everything about the agency in a visual format was released for general use by employees and the public. The program runs

approximately 15 minutes in length and is designed to inform laymen about blindness in general and the Commission specifically. The new slide program was used, and will continue to be used, in the orientation of new employees to the agency.

An integral part of the Agency's continuing effort to offer the highest quality services to its clients involved providing the entire staff with up-to-date knowledge and skills needed to carry out prescribed missions. Virtually every staff member (99.3%) participated, during the year, in one or more in-service training programs. There were 81 training programs during the year either sponsored by the Agency or by other training resources in which agency staff participated. Many agency staff pursued individual, self development programs through the use of the Agency's professional Staff Library resources, in addition to formal training programs.

Dedicated concern and belief in employee performance, along with in-service training, helped to keep the turnover rate of personnel down to a low 18 percent. There were 26 new hires during the year as compared to 24 terminations and ten reclassifications. At the end of the fiscal year, the Commission had 130 full-time and two part-time employees, with eleven vacancies.

All of the Commission's employees have a deep sense of pride and dedication to meeting the needs of the state's blind and visually impaired persons. This demonstration of sincerity was evident in a preliminary report released by a private research firm hired by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare to review all rehabilitation agencies serving the blind. The firm was very favorable in its findings on how effective the employees were in answering client needs.

A toll free telephone line, installed four years ago, continued to provide a valuable link between clients and staff. Over 2,100 calls were logged during the year by people wanting information on services. Eight hundred of these calls were directed to Educational Radio for the Blind, with 187 to Prevention, 156 to the Rehabilitation Center, 72 to Children's Services, 154 to Administration, 67 to Rehabilitation, 178 to Blindcraft, 246 to the Media Center, 130 to the Business Enterprise Program, 42 to Mobility, 23 to Special Services, 24 to Public Information, eight to Personnel, five to Accounting and 11 to Disability Determination.

The list of statistics for Fiscal Year 1979 could go on, but the important issue is that the clients were served.



## VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Vocational Rehabilitation is a process by which the blind and visually impaired are helped toward gainful activity and employment. It is restorative in nature, and encompasses evaluation, orientation, adjustment, physical restoration, job placement and follow-up services, with the end goal being total independence.

Records indicate there were 1,718 clients served by the Rehabilitation Department of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind (SCCB) during the fiscal year in one way or another. Counselors were able to successfully rehabilitate, or close, 365 individuals who were placed in gainful employment, while others received post employment services or maintenance support.

One of the human interest accomplishments of the Vocational Rehabilitation Department was the end result of services provided to a totally blind client who was "a ward of the state." This client was able to receive, through comprehensive vocational rehabilitational services, specialized training to enable her to obtain a professional position with the federal government.

Even though there were not as many clients participating in the regular program at the Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center for the Blind, the percentage of successful closures was up two percent. Eighty-five students attended the Center during the year as compared to 94 for the previous period, for a 65 percent completion rate.

A special summer program for high school students showed a 20 percent increase at the end of the fiscal year. This program is designed to help legally blind students prepare themselves for work and life after graduation. Eleven of the 25 students attending the eight week program worked part-time in the Columbia area to gain experience, learn about responsibilities and earn money. The response to the program has been rewarding and area employers have expressed desires to hire more students in the coming year.

Efforts were made to serve an increased number of blind citizens in rural areas by providing rehabilitation teacher services and mobility instructions through the Mobile Outreach Program. Clients either met at a central location in a city for training or were visited in their homes by professionals. Instructions were given in braille, handicrafts, mobility, and home management, just to name a few. During this reporting period, 521 clients were served. Use of special radio receivers continued to increase in this project and more

programs were developed for this closed circuit network to meet the needs of clients.

In order to exchange ideas and improve delivery of services to clients, the Rehabilitation Center sponsored a three day winter workshop for home management instructors for the blind from all over the South. The information shared and discussed at this meeting was compiled into a bound booklet and distributed to all participants for handy reference.

Another area of continued interest and improvement was that of dealing with deaf-blind clients. An instructor from the Rehabilitation Center was sent to a university specializing in deaf-blind communication skills to bring back ideas and techniques for better service to clients in training.

## BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM

The South Carolina Commission for the Blind (SCCB) functions as the State Licensing Agency for the Randolph-Sheppard Vending Facility Program. The Business Enterprise Program (BEP) of the SCCB has two major purposes: to provide public, federal and private locations with a quality food service; and to offer remunerative employment for the state's blind and visually impaired. Continued growth of this program was witnessed by the fact that 85 vending stand operations generated sales in the fiscal year 1978-1979 of \$2.8 million, an increase of 12 percent from the year before.

Effective July 9, 1978, a new State law passed by the General Assembly of South Carolina, and known as S-59, gave the SCCB first option in establishing a vending stand on public property (any buildings or land owned, leased or occupied by any department or agency of the state or any instrumentality wholly owned by the State or by any county or municipality or other governmental entity). This action generated more tax dollars for the State's Treasury and provided a greater opportunity for gainful employment of blind South Carolinians.

In other areas of importance, a new BEP Supervisor was hired to replace the previous individual who left state government to enter into the private sector of business. A new BEP Operations Manual Business Enterprise Committee, made up of stand managers from across the state, for approval. Continued assurance of an effective BEP System was strengthened with a new selection procedure for transfer and promotion of blind vendors, a more thorough training program, and a more streamlined grievance process.



## **BLINDCRAFT**

### **(Home Industries)**

The Blindcraft Program is designed to work with the blind of South Carolina who cannot compete with the sighted population in industry. Blind persons who are unable to leave their homes on a regular basis are trained in a marketable skill. Upon completion of training, the client returns to his or her home supplied with equipment and materials needed to produce the products. Completed items are returned to Blindcraft for inspection, quality control and marketing.

Encouraging response, during the fiscal year, to the Mobile Blindcraft Exhibit generated more sales of handmade products by the blind. Numerous civic groups reserved the exhibit for their fund raising drives. Festivals and fairs were the most common areas of use while the Lions and Lioness Clubs were the most frequent users. The future of this Mobile Blindcraft Exhibit as a means of marketing Blindcraft items promises to be even greater in the coming years.

A temporary exhibit of blind-made products was placed in the downstairs lobby of the State House building during the year, and the response was so good that a request has been made to make the exhibit permanent.

Further promotion of Blindcraft products was accomplished through an ongoing advertising campaign and by the design and issuance of a new product catalogue.

Products made by Blindcraft clients are unique in that each one is made with painstaking care. Every item has a history of its own, making it truly the only one of its kind. Continued improvement in quality control has resulted in positive responses from vendors. Retraining with emphasis on greater client participation by taking the program to the communities of the State was initiated. Two instructors now spend three days a week in the field. As a result, the clients have shown a renewed pride in both themselves and their work.

## **PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS**

The Prevention of Blindness program of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind (SCCB) touches many aspects of the delivery of medical services to both those who are blind or visually impaired or to those who have pathological conditions which, if untreated, would lead to blindness.

Medical Services include screening and detection of pathologies, eye examinations, and follow-up treatments as necessary. A major portion of the services deal with the restoration of sight problems often times requiring hospitalization and surgery, or with the simple purchase of glasses and visual aids. Counseling and guidance are a very important part of the program, too.

Statistics for Fiscal Year 1978-1979 show there were 211 cataract operations, 17 cases of severe glaucoma requiring surgery, 15 emergency cases, two enucleations, eight cases of strabismus and 247 other related needs.

Glasses and visual aids were secured for 1,039 clients where uncorrected vision rendered them blind. Eye examinations for 1,787 persons were conducted to determine the type of assistance they needed. Follow-up exams for 2,343 people were necessary during the year.

A total of 97 persons were seen in the Low Vision Clinic where 55 were referred by the SCCB Rehabilitation Department, 18 from Children's Services, 22 from Prevention of Blindness and two from private doctors.

April 1, 1979 marked the fifth anniversary of the Mobile Eye Clinic, a cooperative effort of the SCCB and the South Carolina Lions Sight Conservation Association. This van travels the state three days a week conducting free screenings for visual acuity and glaucoma. The unit is booked solid by Lions clubs through the end of 1980. A total of 8,190 people were screened in 43 different locations during the fiscal year. Records indicate there were 91 cases of abnormal eye pressure readings, and in all 3,226 referrals were made by the van to eye specialists.

A thorough updating of the names of legally blind and visually impaired persons on the South Carolina Register of Blind and Visually Impaired Citizens brought the number of legally blind listings down to 7,188 and 16,623 partially sighted.



## SPECIAL SERVICES

The Special Services Division of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind (SCCB) lost its supervisor during Fiscal Year 1979 when the individual accepted a position with National Public Radio for the Handicapped in Washington. Supervision of the department, which includes Children's Services, Volunteer Services, Educational Radio for the Blind and the Media Center, was turned over to the Deputy Commissioner until a replacement could be found.

South Carolina Educational Radio for the Blind increased both its number of listeners as well as its daily broadcast hours. There are now a total of 830 receivers in the field, an increase of approximately 30 percent over the number issued last year. In addition, repairs on some of the older receivers (five years plus) extended their reception "life". South Carolina Educational Radio for the Blind, with the addition of ten program hours per week, now broadcasts a total of 74 hours over a period of six days. Plans call for another expansion of hours in the new Fiscal Year. New programs initiated during 1978-1979 included courses in amateur/ham radio, genealogy research for the blind, weekly reports from the S.C. School for the Deaf and the Blind, Community Closeup, in-depth reports concerning services for the blind available through the community and state, and feature broadcasts on the latest technological developments for the blind. And, this diversified radio network was well received and complimented at the National Association of Radio Reading Services in Nashville last year.

The Children's Services Department of the SCCB sponsored a Parent's Workshop in March that drew rave reviews. This three-day session, entitled "Learning Together on Behalf of Your Child" and held at the Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center, was considered by its participants as the best ever. A minimum of 250 volunteer hours were contributed by 39 child care volunteers, 12 children's instructors, nine guest speakers and 14 SCCB staff members. There were 50 children and 48 adults attending the meeting, making it the largest ever.

Sixty-six boys and girls, ages 7 to 16, attended the fourth annual version of Camp Leo during the first part of the year. Highlights of the week-long event included boat rides, cookouts and clean cabin contests. Accounts of camp activities were aired daily over Educational Radio for the Blind and many of the camper's parents enjoyed knowing what was happening.

The Children's Services Department again received Title XX funding on a limited basis to provide services to Title XX eligible clients throughout the State. These services will include mobility instruction and home teaching.

Statistics for the SCCB Media Center reflected, again, the nationwide trend of a reduction in talking book machine users, while the number of cassette player users is still on the increase. A total of 176 talking book machines were issued in Fiscal Year 1979, a decrease of 28%. Cassette players increased by 42% with a total figure of 311. The number of braille pages processed increased from 19,465 to 21,675. By contrast, the production of large print volumes decreased by 41% as compared to a 78% decrease last year. The number of volunteer hours given in the Media Center to patrons of the Commission totaled 1,515.

Volunteer Services got a new director on May 25th to recruit, select, screen and train volunteers to assist in reading materials for broadcast over the South Carolina Educational Radio for the Blind network. This program, during the remaining month of Fiscal Year 1979, was well under way with the development of a community contact list, a record log of volunteer activities and the auditioning and training of four volunteer readers for a total of 18 hours of taped broadcasts produced with a total of 29½ hours of time given free of charge. Six hours of periodical readings were prepared with 9½ hours of volunteer time and 12 hours of newspaper articles were recorded by three volunteers. The new Director was in contact with the Central Ohio Radio Reading Services in Columbus and also with the Talking Book Program in Nashville, Tennessee for ideas. He was also involved in developing recruiting pamphlets for the program.



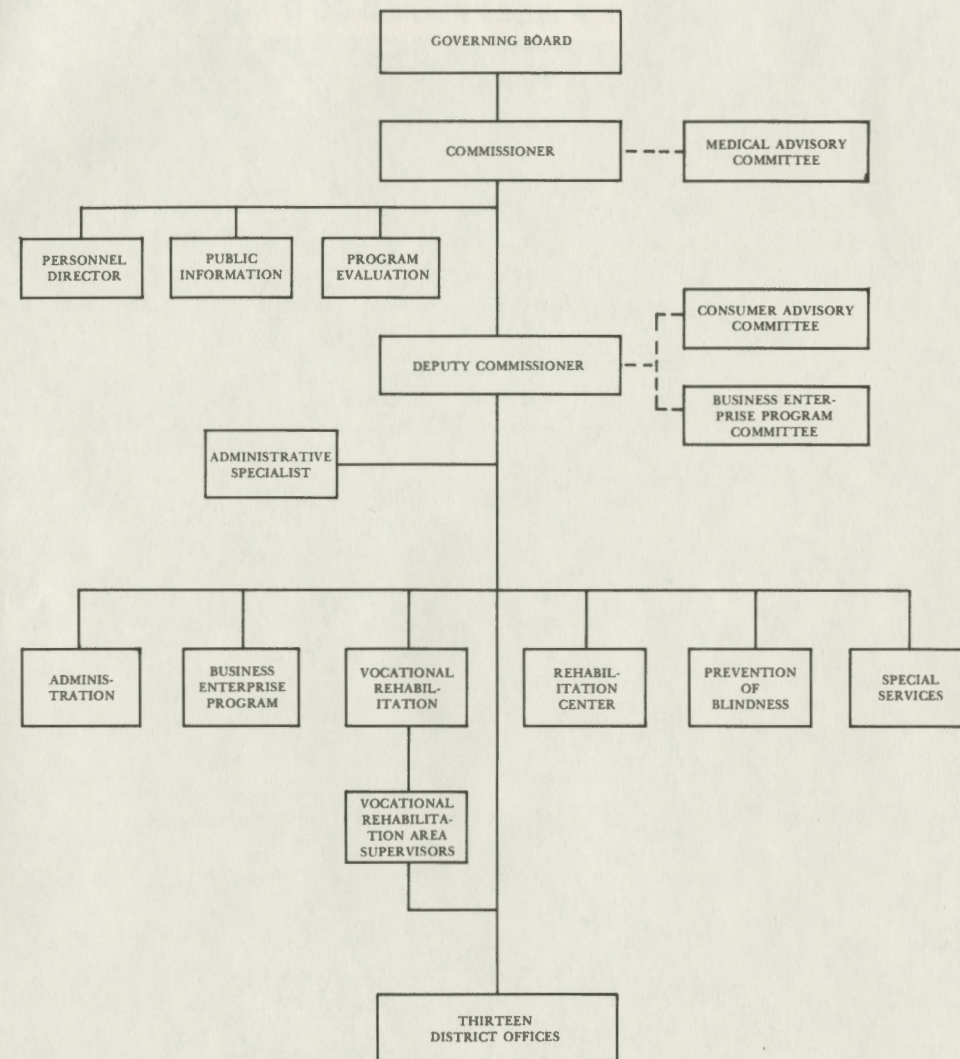
## SOURCE OF FUNDS

Fiscal Year 1978-1979

1. Federal Government .....	\$2,074,914
2. State Government .....	2,121,626
3. Donations .....	24,171
Total — All Funds .....	\$4,220,711

## EXPENDITURES

1. Administration .....	\$ 985,945
2. Prevention of Blindness .....	497,969
3. Rehabilitation Services .....	2,470,423
4. Special Services .....	266,374
Total Expenditures .....	\$4,220,711



SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

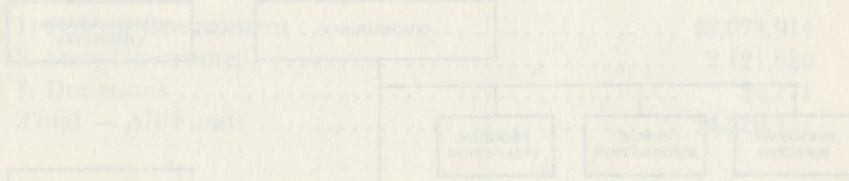




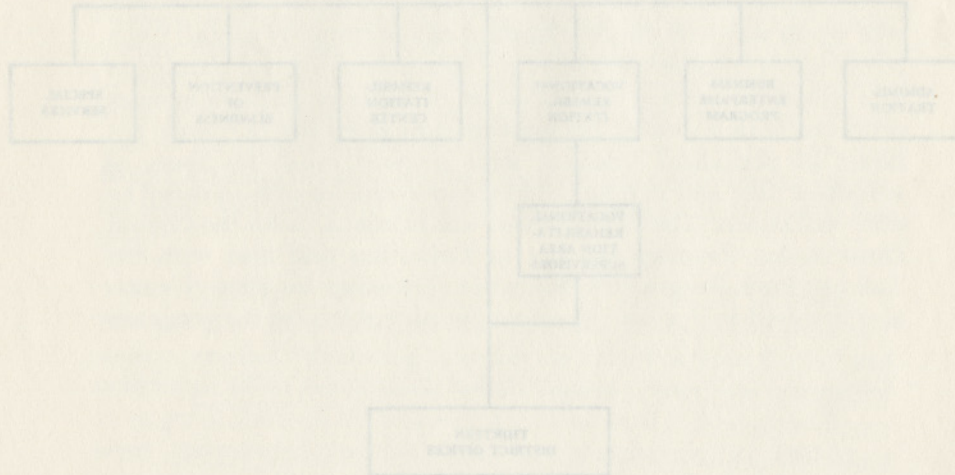
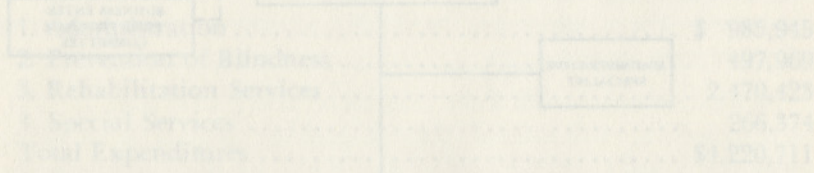
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# SOURCE OF FUNDS

Fiscal Year 1975-1976



# EXPENDITURES



SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND